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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

10 May 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: [redacted] 25X1
Colonel Gerald F. Lillard, G-2
Captain Ray Malpass, ONI
Colonel Jack E. Thomas, AFOIN-2A
Colonel S. M. Lansing, JIG

SUBJECT : Procedures for Reducing Intelligence Deficiencies in National Intelligence Estimates.

REFERENCES : a. Post-Mortem meetings held by the IAC representatives on NIE-35/1.

b. G-2 Draft Survey of Intelligence Deficiencies Revealed in the Preparation of National Intelligence Estimates.

ENCLOSURE : O/NE Proposed Revision of G-2 Draft.

1. We have reviewed with care the proposal of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Intelligence, for the conduct of post-mortems of NIE's (Reference b). This was circulated to you by G-2 on 23 April.

2. Pursuant to our review of the G-2 proposal, we have prepared a revision, with explanatory comment on each paragraph, which we now propose as a basis for discussion in an effort to finalize a procedure designed to accomplish the objectives on which the IAC representatives agreed in the course of past discussions.

3. It would be appreciated if you or your representative met with us on the enclosed draft at 10:00 Wednesday, 14 May, in Room 132 South Building.

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D/Asst. Director/Adm.
National Estimates

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PROCEDURES FOR REDUCING INTELLIGENCE DEFICIENCIES
IN NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES
(O/NE Revision of G-2 Draft)

1. When terms of reference are circulated, agencies will be requested to ascertain at once items in their fields regarding which there is inadequate intelligence. Such items will be referred to appropriate collection agencies with a request that needed intelligence be secured, when practicable, in time for use in the estimate.

Comment. This combines paragraphs 1 and 2 of the G-2 proposal. Aside from verbal changes, it eliminates the idea that agencies "indicate" (to whom is not clear) items on which intelligence appears to be inadequate. Such inadequacy can be assessed at this stage only by the contributing agency itself, and there seems to be little use in a procedure for indicating to O/NE or to other agencies what needs to be done or is being done.

2. During the preparation of the integrated draft, inadequacies that are discovered in contributions will be referred to the contributing agencies for elaboration. This may be done in writing or through informal conference. Sometimes the elaboration will be a matter of research. At other times collection may be necessary.

Comment. This follows closely paragraph 3 of the G-2 proposal. It adds the idea that reference need not be through formal methods. Under present procedures informal discussion is frequently used to great profit. We hope this practice will continue and expand to the extent practicable.

3. During the formalizing of the estimate by IAC representatives, if the inadequacy of available intelligence is ascertained, the requirement may be discussed either within the meeting or informally outside it. When a subsequent draft is circulated, this draft will note the requirement with a statement that the appropriate agency either has been or is thereby requested to clarify or amplify the point.

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Comment. This amplifies somewhat the first sentence of paragraph 4 of the G-2 proposal. In some cases, meetings of IAC representatives are scheduled at such close intervals that new drafts are not circulated between meetings. It therefore seems desirable to provide for informal means of discussion, such as are now used on many occasions. The idea of noting requirements in the next draft is an excellent one, however, and should be followed where there is such a draft.

4. After an estimate is finished, each agency will collect comments from appropriate sources and refer them to the Assistant Director for National Estimates. On the basis of these comments, supplemented by its own views, the Office of National Estimates will pursue one of the two following courses:

(A) Prepare a "Consolidated Critique" containing the comments received from agencies and also O/NE views, with a summary indicating weaknesses in the conclusions or supporting evidence that are suggested either by the comments or by O/NE itself. Such a "Consolidated Critique" will require no further action and will be circulated to the agencies for information only.

(B) Draft a proposed "Statement of Intelligence Deficiencies." This will include intelligence deficiencies pointed out in comments received from agencies and also those believed by O/NE to exist. Following circulation of this draft Statement, O/NE will convene a meeting to be attended by representatives of the estimates staffs of the agencies, of the Secretary of the IAC (who is also the Assistant Director for Intelligence Coordination, CIA), and to the extent practicable of collection agencies. The purpose of this meeting will be (1) to determine whether agreement exists among the

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estimators that existing intelligence is inadequate and in what respects; (2) to determine whether corrective action is indicated in the assignment of collection priorities or responsibilities for collection or production. After this meeting the ensuing procedure will depend on whether agreement is reached on point (1), as follows:

(1) If such agreement is reached, the Statement will be forwarded to the IAC for noting as an "Agreed Statement." This Statement may be accompanied by specific recommendations for action, by a general recommendation that the Secretary of the IAC be directed to explore corrective action with the agencies concerned, or by a statement that no specific action is recommended and that each agency will take continuing action within the field of its responsibilities.

(2) If agreement is not reached on point (1), no "Agreed Statement" will be forwarded to the IAC. O/NE will forward its Statement (revised if necessary) to the Director of Central Intelligence, indicating which agencies concur in it and which disagree, and the Director may then take action under applicable NSC directives.

Comment. This adopts G-2's idea of collecting comment from appropriate sources, but goes substantially further than the rest of the G-2 proposal. At the same time it attempts to limit the amount of agency time, and specifically the number of meetings, required for the process. The notable differences from the G-2 proposal, and the reasons therefor, are as follows:

1. It is left to O/NE to determine whether a supplementary meeting shall be held. In the G-2 proposal such a meeting is to be held only if the agencies concur that "further action" is necessary. It is not clear whether such concurrence

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has to be unanimous, nor is it clear whether "further action" means that specific corrective steps must be in mind, as opposed to admission of the existence of the deficiencies. In any event O/NE believes that the C-2 system would be unwieldy and time-consuming in itself. At the same time it expects that O/NE's own serious workload problems, plus its interest in preserving cooperative relationships with the agencies, will prevent meetings from being called unadvisedly or lightly.

2. A separation is made between a statement of intelligence deficiencies and recommendations for corrective action. The former is felt to lie within the province of the estimators, while the latter must necessarily involve the collectors as well. To bring collectors fully into the picture, however, would be cumbersome and, if it develops that the deficiencies are not as stated (or even non-existent), premature. For this reason, unless there is clear gap in the intelligence effort, it is not expected that the meeting will generally be able to produce concrete recommendations for corrective action. Although provision is made for such recommendations, it is expected that in the normal case the matter will be handed over to the Secretary of the IAC.

3. Suggestions or recommendations for corrective action are not limited to the assignment of collection responsibilities but may also include collection priorities. O/NE believes that the great bulk of correctible deficiencies will be found to arise from insufficient priority, and that suggestions for action in this field are essential to the usefulness of the process. O/NE also believes recommendations may occasionally be appropriate in the field of production (including research).

4. In line with the distinction drawn between the naming of weaknesses and recommendations for corrective action, provision is made for tabling a statement of the former, if agreement can be reached, regardless of the conclusion as to the latter. Whether or not there is agreement on corrective action, O/NE believes that the estimators have an obligation to submit to the IAC a statement within their competence. (In O/NE's judgement the filing of such a statement is less likely to lead to future recrimination than the non-filing of one.) Even if no specific changes in priority or responsibility are made, moreover, a statement of deficiencies may serve an extremely useful purpose as a guide in the preparation of requirements.

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5. If agreement cannot be reached on the statement of deficiencies, the Director of Central Intelligence may proceed under the powers conferred by the National Security Act and directives thereunder. This power would exist in any event. The proposed procedure, however, carries out the letter and spirit of paragraphs 1 and 3 of NSCID #1, Revised, in securing maximum consultation with the representatives of the IAC.

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